

Natural Resources Advisory Board
July 27th, 2015
Meeting Minutes

IDNR Staff:

Director Rosenthal
Stan McTaggart
Ann Holtrop
Tami Evans

Tim Schweizer
Mike Stevens
Eric Schmidt

Mark Alessi
Randy Smith
Amber Krager

Board Members:

John Fleischli
Marshall Douglas
Marcia Polhamus
Mike Kepple

Jerry Hiller
Matt Langendorf
Darel Martin

Scott Bryant
Robert Wilson
Aaron Kuehl

Director Rosenthal opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. Roll call was given; quorum was met. Board members provided a brief introduction.

A motion to accept the July 27, 2015 agenda was provided by Marshall Douglas; Matt Langendorf provided the second. No opposition was heard.

A motion to adopt the November 2014 meeting minutes was provided by Matt Langendorf; Jerry Hiller provided the second. No opposition was heard.

A motion to adopt the April 20, 2015 meeting minutes was provided by Scott Bryant; Marcia Polhamus provided the second. No opposition was heard.

Chair/Vice Chair Appointments – Director Rosenthal asked for nominations for Chair and Vice Chair. Mike Kepple nominated John Fleischli as Chair and Marcia Polhamus as Vice Chair; no opposition was heard.

Monarch Butterfly – Ann Holtrop, Division of Natural Heritage - The Monarch Butterfly is declining nationwide. The USF&W is currently looking to see if the Monarch should be listed under the Endangered Species Act.

IDNR is looking into ways to engage conservation actions before the butterfly becomes critically low. Ann provided an overview of the initiatives IDNR has done to support the Monarch over the past few years. Information shared with board members is at the following link.

<https://dnr.portal.illinois.gov/teams/directors/Communications/Monarch%20Butterfly%20NRAB%20July%202015.pdf>

IDNR is participating in a regional grant proposal to develop regional strategies for the Monarch. This is IDNR's first attempt to document a statewide strategy that will give IDNR the opportunity to work with regional conservation partners as part of a larger initiative making actions more effective.

Illinois' role is to have a statewide summit with key players throughout the state to begin identifying both core habitat areas and size of habitat areas needed, and then work with our partners to start creating that habitat. These actions will be added into the Wildlife Action Plan which already has a network of partners that can assist in implementation.

Regional workshops will allow Illinois to work with other states on how Illinois's piece fits into the region, take those statewide strategies and develop a regional plan. IDNR continues to participate with other organizations around the state in these efforts.

ICF – Eric Schmidt – The Illinois Conservation Foundation was formed as a result of Conservation Congress and has been in existence for 21 years. ICF is the charitable arm of the Department and supports DNR activities throughout the state. ICF is self-sufficient and continually looks for help in supporting its efforts.

ICF continues to evolve and has shifted some of its focus to youth oriented programs. Five years ago, ICF took over the Torstenson Farm, a 750 acre property that has served over 6,000 kids with educational programs, nature walks, hunting & fishing opportunities and safety classes. There is also a mobile education station that has all the activities on board that you would find at the Farm.

An open house is scheduled at the Torstenson Farm on Sunday, August 2. A lot of partnering organizations will be on hand as well as media coverage. There will be tours of the property and educational activities will be available.

The ICF Hall of Fame is scheduled for September 24, 2015 and is one of ICF's biggest fundraisers. There are three new Hall of Fame inductees in 2015.

Waterfowl Issues – Randy Smith/Mark Alessi – Wildlife staff provided the 2015 IDNR Waterfowl Open House Questionnaire and set up poster's that were shared at the three open houses in Wilmington, East Alton & Carterville in May 2015. Posters, questionnaire and early game bird selection justification can be found at the following links.

<https://dnr.portal.illinois.gov/teams/directors/Communications/2015WaterfowlZoneLinePublicMeetings.pdf> (Posters)

<https://dnr.portal.illinois.gov/teams/directors/Communications/2015%20Waterfowl%20Questionnaire.pdf> (Questionnaire)

<https://dnr.portal.illinois.gov/teams/directors/Communications/2015%20Early%20Game%20Bird%20Season%20Selection%20Justification.pdf> (Early Game Bird Selection Justification)

NRAB serves as the public review process for all waterfowl regulations. Recommendations are made by the board and sent to the Director for approval before recommendations are submitted to the USF&W. There is no statute or administrative rule that sets waterfowl seasons.

The current USF&W process divides early and regular waterfowl seasons into different sets of regulations. Early season selection is due to the USF&W by August 1, 2015. USF&W is changing their

regulatory process relative to the timing of when seasons are set and will only have one regulatory package. This will allow seasons to be set in advance instead of a few weeks before the season opens.

Teal season typically opens on a Saturday giving a full three week season of teal hunting.

Staff recommendations include: Statewide season, Saturday, September 5 through Sunday, September 20th with a limit of 6 blue or green winged/teal per day.

There has been a lot of talk at the flyway level to liberalize the Canada Geese season. There are more geese in the north & central zones, and more conflicts. Generally, there is a 41% harvest rate in the north, 50 % in the central and 9% in the south.

Staff recommendations include: Statewide season, Tuesday, September 1 through Tuesday, September 15, 2015, 5 geese a day in the north & central zones and 2 geese a day in the south central & south zones.

After brief discussion, Mike Kepple motioned to accept staff recommendations for both Teal Season and the September Canada Goose Season. Scott Bryant provided the second; no opposition was heard.

Deer Issues – Mark Alessi – Mark provided a power point presentation on the Illinois Deer Harvest 1957-2014.

<https://dnr.portal.illinois.gov/teams/directors/Communications/Illinois%20Deer%20Harvest%201957-2014.jpg>

Deer hunting is the department's largest constituency with 260,000 hunters generating between twenty five to thirty million dollars in permit sales. A lot of time and effort is put into administering IDNR's hunting programs.

The department is looking at three proposed changes to its deer hunting program.

One is allowing youth hunters to use their unfilled youth permit during the first shotgun firearm deer season in the county of the permit, and that is open to statewide regulations but not in special hunt areas or counties where there may be limited quota's. If hunting is on private property, there should not be an issue. A list of youth specific sites will be out and available soon. This proposal is on first notice with JCAR; there have not been any public comments to date.

IDNR has recommended doing away with non-resident antlerless only over the counter permits because of apparent abuse. 8,500 tags were sold last year and well over half were under investigation by Conservation Police. The plan is to bring back antlerless over the counter permits next year but non-residents will be required to buy a combination permit first. Non-resident combination permits are \$410; antlerless \$25.00.

If this proposal is adopted by JCAR by October 1, antlerless only tags will not be available for the 2015 hunting season. There is not a plan to set a maximum number of permits for 2016. The focus will remain on the biological side in terms of population needs.

All archery is statewide. The majority of harvest is during shotgun. If there needs to be restrictions, the flexibility comes in the late winter seasons.

The recommendation is on first notice with JCAR; 10 public comments have been received to date. Each comment will be addressed before they go to 2nd notice. All comments will be presented to the director and decisions will be made to move forward. It is possible that JCAR could delay the proposal because of the comments and because of the potential fiscal impact.

Archery deer bag limits – The department will be delaying this proposal until more data can be collected through the statewide survey. The proposal will be revisited in the near future.

Matt Langendorf asked if consideration had ever been given to having a 10 day straight, shotgun deer season. The goal is to allow as much recreational activity as possible, as long as it falls within the framework, and as allowed by law. The suggestion will be included in the statewide survey for hunter feedback.

Darel Martin added that the public has a perception that IDNR bases deer hunting, specifically the first lottery on participation, not on the biology. Wildlife staff is working on a new website for whitetail deer management which will give hunters the data they need and so they can see and understand the process more clearly.

Hunter Lake – Director Rosenthal stated that IDNR will assist the City of Springfield with management purposes of the proposed Hunter Lake.

Board Comments:

Director Rosenthal invited everyone to Westwood's for dinner after the meeting.

Marshall Douglas mentioned that the Grand American Trap Shoot at the World Recreational Shooting Complex in Sparta, IL has a significant economic impact on the State of Illinois. It's a 10 day event and if Illinois loses that event it will be devastating to the local economy. Director Rosenthal added that DNR continues to search for an executive director.

The next board meeting is scheduled for November 2, however, an alternate date will be sent out to members shortly. Marcia suggested that the board meetings be moved up at least an hour.

Tami will update the board member contact list and share with the board.

Public Comments:

None

John motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.; Marcia provided the second.

